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NFAC #1198-80

15 February 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Klaus Knorr  
NFAC/SRP

SUBJECT : Principles and Issues for Planning in the Africa Area

1. In thinking about the work that should be developed regarding Africa over the next year, it seems to me that one or two general points should be raised prior to raising specific issues.

- (1) It becomes increasingly clear that the policy issues with which we will be concerned over the next two or three years no longer fall neatly into the traditional continental divisions. Rather, they concern combinations of areas which we have not addressed directly up to the present moment. By this I mean, of course, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean which involve not only Africa and the Middle East but South and Southeast Asia and all of the islands contained by the Indian Ocean. The same point might be made with reference to the South Atlantic. While this is not of as immediate policy concern, nevertheless the South Atlantic as a strategic area involving both Africa and Latin America as well as Europe, to some degree, falls into the "non-continental" category.
- (2) I think the question of penetration into the LDC's should be addressed as an overall principle. Clearly the traditional techniques of imperial penetration by European powers or the great powers still remain but new penetrations are taking place which reflect many interests different from those of traditional imperialism or mercantilism. So, for example, we are witnessing penetration by Libya in at least nine sub-Saharan African countries; penetration by Iraq into a number of sub-Saharan African countries as well; and continuing and growing interest on the part of other Arab states in the sub-Saharan African area. Not only are there different effects of penetration but the techniques and objectives of this kind of penetration are different. This notion can be extended beyond Africa since there

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is evidence of Libyan interest in parts of the Caribbean and Latin America as well.

2. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has had a ripple effect throughout the LDC's -- there but for the grace of God -- and it will affect their attitudes and perceptions toward the two Great Powers. They may be looking for efforts at subversion from sources not hitherto considered. Some of the standard arguments against MWC's and Western Imperialism may not carry the validity they once did. Accordingly, portends of destabilization will be more closely observed and the sensitivities of the LDC's to suspected subversion from whatever source will be heightened. An increased effort may be expected to hold both super powers at arm's length; this in turn will have a direct effect on both Soviet and American relations with the LDC's.

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3. In the light of these observations the specific issues to be raised for the sub-Saharan African area over the next year will be included in a second and later memorandum.

- (1) The role of African nations such as Libya or Nigeria in the stabilization or destabilization of sub-Saharan African regimes.
- (2) The role of the Arab states in stabilization and destabilization in sub-Saharan Africa.
- (3) The degree to which these new penetrations reflect collusion with the Soviet Union.
- (4) Stabilization of the southern African quadrant in the light of forthcoming events in Zimbabwe.
- (5) The regional role of Nigeria as a stabilizing force.
- (6) The role of the Horn of Africa in the light of the new strategic interests of the US in the Indian Ocean area.
- (7) Food and population prospects in general and in specific countries.
- (8) Trends in Soviet, Cuban and East German presence and activity in sub-Saharan Africa.
- (9) Impact of Islam in general and in specific sub-Saharan African countries.
- (10) Directional character of trends in regard to French influence and presence in the Francophone area of West and Central Africa.
- (11) Energy prospects in Africa.



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